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Mr Ed Read
Headteacher
Cumnor Church of England Primary School (Voluntary Controlled)
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Dear Mr Read

Short inspection of Cumnor Church of England Primary School (Voluntary Controlled)

Following my visit to the school on 14 September 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Staff, governors and parents have confidence in your leadership, which inspires everyone in the school community to work supportively together for the benefit of the pupils. Parents, in particular, recognise the rapid journey of improvement the school has undertaken in recent years. The shared sense of pride and community is evident throughout your school, and motivates staff and pupils to keep working hard and improving.

Pupils benefit greatly from coming to your school. They achieve very well in their studies, with much higher proportions achieving age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics than is typical nationally. They enjoy opportunities to learn across a rich and diverse curriculum. Parents recognise how effectively their children are prepared for the challenges of secondary school, when they leave Cumnor at the end of Year 6.

Since the last inspection, the school has continued to improve. There has been a sustained focus on developing the quality of teaching further, so that it meets pupils' needs more precisely than in the past. Staff now have consistently high expectations for how pupils present their written work. You have put in place efficient systems to enable all leaders to check the quality of teaching. Regular

monitoring across the school focuses on the difference teaching makes to pupils' outcomes. This supports open and honest conversations with individual staff, who value and act on advice about how to improve their work. It also enables early identification of pupils who are not doing as well as they could, so that appropriate action can be taken to support and challenge them.

Although pupils attain high standards throughout their time at the school, they do not consistently make rapid progress from their typically high starting points. Progress across key stage 2 is improving as a result of the focused work to refine and develop the quality of teaching. However, progress in writing, while secure, could accelerate further. This would enable the most able to achieve even better outcomes by the end of Year 6. You recognise this challenge as a priority for the school as it continues to move forward.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils undoubtedly feel safe at your school. They are happy and confident members of a tight-knit community. Staff know pupils well, and place great importance on helping them develop as well-rounded individuals. Parents recognise this as a considerable strength of the school. The open-door routines at the start of the day help to foster clear lines of communication between families and staff, so that any concerns or vulnerabilities can be addressed promptly.

Systems and structures contribute effectively to the culture of safeguarding at your school. You make careful checks on adults working in the school, and keep suitably detailed records. Staff and governors are supported well by appropriate policies and useful training so that they understand their safeguarding responsibilities clearly. Safeguarding procedures and documentation are fit for purpose.

Pupils come to school regularly. Where concerns arise about a pupil's attendance, open relationships between families and the school ensure that prompt action is taken to address it. Staff know those pupils who are potentially vulnerable, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They make good use of extra help from beyond the school to support families who would benefit from it. As a result, pupils whose attendance needed to improve now come to school more regularly than in the past.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we focused on: how leaders ensure that improvements to the school are sustained; the progress pupils make from their relatively high starting points; and what contributes to the typically strong outcomes by the end of the early years foundation stage, particularly for boys.
- Leaders' effective systems enable them to identify promptly and accurately the strengths of the school and its priorities for ongoing improvement. Governors, supported usefully by their skills and expertise, know the school well. They hold leaders to account for the difference their work is making.

- Leaders recognised the improvements that were needed in mathematics across the school. A carefully thought out approach has improved the quality of learning in mathematics over time, which is leading to better outcomes and progress for pupils by the end of Year 6. Leaders have identified that improving pupils' progress in writing is the next priority for the school, and have begun some initial work to address this key area.
- Pupils typically attain well throughout their time at the school. The proportions of pupils who achieve at least the expected standard at the end of early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 are consistently at least in line with, and often above, national figures. However, pupils do not routinely make strong and rapid progress over time, particularly if they have very high starting points.
- The school's performance information and work in pupils' books show that pupils across all year groups continue to work at least at, and often above, the standard expected for their age. Pupils' progress is accelerating over time in mathematics, as a result of the recent focus on improving how effectively this subject is taught. Leaders recognise that, while progress in writing is secure, it could be more rapid, particularly for the most able pupils. This would help them to achieve even higher standards by the end of Year 6.
- The early years foundation stage has gone from strength to strength, as a result of high-quality teaching and a focus on continuous improvement. Consequently, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of early years is well above the national average. The early years teacher, who joined the school very recently, recognises the many strengths in this part of the school. She has a clear plan for building on this success.
- Boys, in particular, achieve very well during the early years foundation stage, bucking the national trend and outperforming girls in school. The proportion achieving a good level of development in 2016 was well above that seen nationally for boys. The 2017 school performance information indicates a similarly strong picture. Leaders recognise using early opportunities for mark-making and writing as key to this, and adapt indoor- and outdoor-learning activities frequently to achieve this. As a result, pupils develop fine motor control and a love of writing at an early stage, and become capable writers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' progress accelerates further, especially in writing, by making sure that those with higher starting points are suitably stretched and challenged by their work.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Oxford, the regional schools commissioner and the director of

children's services for Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Moles
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

We visited each classroom together, to observe learning, talk to pupils and look at their work. Along with your English and mathematics leaders, I reviewed some examples of work in pupils' books. Together, we considered your school's self-evaluation and a range of evidence to support it, including pupils' performance information, documents on the school website, and records about the quality of teaching over time. I reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements, including the central record of recruitment checks, relevant policies and records. I met groups of pupils, staff and governors, and spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I gathered views about the school through 61 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, 58 free-text comments from parents and 18 responses to the staff survey. I also spoke to a number of parents informally at the start of the day.